

The Presidential Inauguration: Basic Facts and Information

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Summary

On January 20, 2013, President Barack Obama is to be sworn in for his second term. Because January 20 is on a Sunday, however, the ceremonial swearing-in and public inaugural ceremonies will take place on Monday, January 21, 2013.

This report responds to a variety of questions relating to the presidential inauguration: legislation concerning the inauguration; inauguration day as a federal holiday; the major costs of the 2009 inauguration; the expenditures of recent inaugural festivities (private funding only provided); historical facts on past presidential inaugurations; the various inaugural committees supporting the inauguration; and historical information on the parade, the swearing-in, and other events.

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The Presidential Inauguration

The next public inauguration ceremony is to take place on January 21, 2013. The 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states, “The terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January ...,”¹ but when January 20 falls on a Sunday, following historic precedent, the public ceremony is held on the following Monday. The White House will organize a private swearing-in on January 20.²

Legislation

In early 2012, both the Senate and House of Representatives approved S.Con.Res. 35, a resolution establishing the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies (JCCIC), and S.Con.Res. 36, a resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Rotunda and Emancipation Hall of the Capitol Visitor Center by the JCCIC.

S.Con.Res. 2 in the 113th Congress reauthorized the committee and the use of the Rotunda, Emancipation Hall, and Capitol Grounds for the inauguration.

Inauguration Day as a Federal Holiday

The local Inauguration Day holiday falls on Monday, January 21, 2013, which is also the legal public holiday for the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. (See 5 U.S.C. 6103(c)). According to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website, for federal employees who work in the District of Columbia, Montgomery or Prince George’s Counties in Maryland, Arlington or Fairfax Counties in Virginia, or the cities of Alexandria or Fairfax in Virginia, Inauguration Day is observed concurrently with the Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday. Federal employees in these areas are not entitled to an in-lieu-of holiday for Inauguration Day.³

Funding for the 2009 Inauguration and Festivities

Public Funding

In 2009, public funds supported the inaugural swearing-in ceremony, security, maintenance, construction, bleachers, fencing, and cleanup. Determining the total costs of an inauguration, however, is difficult.

Appropriated funds used to support inauguration activities can be found in accounts that may not be specifically labeled for inaugural purposes. For example, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) designates the inauguration as a National Special Security Event (NSSE). As such, funds appropriated by Congress for NSSEs are available for inauguration security even though no specific mention of inaugurations exists in the NSSE statutes. Consequently, determining the total public funding for the inauguration must consider both specific inauguration appropriations and other accounts that might support inauguration activities. In both cases,

¹ Ratified January 23, 1933.

² Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies website <http://www.inaugural.senate.gov/about/jan-21>.

³ See OPM’s 2013 *Federal Holiday* website at http://www.opm.gov/Operating_Status_Schedules/fedhol/2013.asp. For more information on federal holidays, see CRS Report R41990, *Federal Holidays: Evolution and Current Practices*, by Jacob R. Straus.

spending on the inauguration is infrequently identified by name and is therefore difficult to determine with any certainty.

For the 2009 inauguration, examples of federal entities that were provided specific authorization to spend appropriated money to support inaugural events include

- the Architect of the Capitol, which was authorized to spend \$3.6 million on Capitol building inaugural support—including building the inauguration platform on the West Front Steps of the Capitol;⁴
- the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, which was authorized \$1.24 million;⁵ and
- the National Park Service, which was authorized to spend \$2 million “for security and visitor safety activities related to the Presidential Inaugural Ceremonies.”⁶

Also, several entities reported using existing funds to support the 2009 inauguration activities. Examples of these included the District of Columbia government, which reported that it spent an estimated \$42.98 million on inauguration-related law enforcement, first responders, transportation, and communication,⁷ and the Joint Task Force-Armed Forces Inaugural Committee and the Department of Defense, which reported a total cost of \$21.6 million for military personnel, operation and maintenance, and procurement.⁸

Private Funding

The Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC) is the privately funded, non-profit, non-governmental, partisan organization that represents the interests of the President-Elect. It is formed after the November election. The PIC plans and executes most of the inaugural activities, which include the opening ceremonies, the inaugural parade, the inaugural balls, inaugural dinners, concerts, and galas. For 2013, the PIC webpage can be found at <http://2013pic.org>.

According to Federal Election Commission (FEC) reports, donations to the 2009 PIC for Barack Obama’s inauguration totaled \$54,277,443. After total donations refunded were subtracted from total donations accepted, net donations equaled \$53,242,568. (See FEC Form 13, “Report of Donations Accepted,” filed July 20, 2009, and available on the FEC website at http://images.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/fecimg/?_29934325817+0).

⁴ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations. *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008: Division H—Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2008*, print to accompany H.R. 2764 (P.L. 110-161), 110th Cong., 1st sess., (Washington: GPO, 2007), p. 1886, at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CPRT-110HPRT39564/pdf/CPRT-110HPRT39564-DivisionH.pdf>.

⁵ *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008: Division H—Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2008*, p. 1854.

⁶ U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations. *Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance, and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2009: Division A—Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2009*, print to accompany H.R. 2638 (P.L. 110-329), 110th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: GPO, 2009), p. 16, at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CPRT-110HPRT44807/pdf/CPRT-110HPRT44807-Part2.pdf>.

⁷ District of Columbia, “District Issues Annual Report on City’s Preparedness; Releases Presidential Inauguration After-Action Report,” news release, June 8, 2009.

⁸ Email between CRS and Department of Defense OASD Legislative Affairs, December 20, 2012. For more information on inauguration security, including the United States Secret Service and National Special Security Events, see CRS Report R42867, *Inauguration Security: Operations, Appropriations, and Issues for Congress*, by Shawn Reese, Jacob R. Straus, and Christina M. Bailey; and CRS Report RS22754, *National Special Security Events*, by Shawn Reese.

Historical Information

Costs (Private Funding Only) of Past Inaugural Festivities

Following is information on financing of past inaugural festivities from private funding sources only:⁹

- George W. Bush, 2005, estimated \$42.3 million;¹⁰ 2001, estimated \$30 million;¹¹
- Bill Clinton, 1997, estimated \$29 million (included is the \$9 million surplus from the 1993 inauguration); 1993, estimated between \$25 million and \$30 million;
- George H. W. Bush, 1989, estimated \$30 million;
- Ronald Reagan, 1985, estimated \$20 million; 1981, estimated \$16.3 million;
- Jimmy Carter, 1977, estimated \$3.5 million; and
- Richard Nixon, 1973, estimated \$4 million.

Past Presidential Inaugurations

Historical information on past presidential inaugurations can be found at the Library of Congress website, Presidential Inaugurations: “I Do Solemnly Swear ...,” which is a collection of 400 selected items from each of the 65 inaugurations, from George Washington’s in 1789 to Barack Obama’s in 2009. A wealth of historical information can be found at <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/pihtml/pihome.html>, including

- diaries and letters of Presidents and of those who witnessed the inaugurations;
- handwritten drafts of inaugural addresses;
- inaugural-related broadsides;
- past inaugural tickets and programs;
- inaugural prints, photographs, and sheet music;
- facts about the oaths of office, precedents, and notable events; and
- Bible and scripture passages for each President since George Washington.

Recent Presidential Inaugurations

The PBS Online NewsHour website provides information on the 2009 inauguration. http://www.pbs.org/newshour/indepth_coverage/white_house/inauguration2009/

Inaugural Photographs/Images

The Presidential Inaugural—Documentary Photographs website of the Smithsonian Institution provides photographs of recent inaugurals (1985-1997), including photographs of inaugural festivities held at various Smithsonian Museums since 1881. http://photo2.si.edu/inaugural/inau_top/inaugural.html

⁹ Estimated costs through 1997 are from the 1997 Presidential Inaugural Committee and *Facts on File*, 1997.

¹⁰ FEC Form 13, “Report of Donations Accepted,” filed July 19, 2005, and available on the FEC website at http://images.nictusa.com/cgi-bin/fecimg/?_25038844606+0).

¹¹ “Bush Takes Oath of Office as 43rd U.S. President,” *Facts on File World Press Digest*, January 20, 2001.

“I Do Solemnly Swear”: A Half Century of Inaugural Images from the U.S. Senate Collection features historic engravings that depict inaugural festivities at the Capitol and around Washington, DC, from Franklin Pierce’s 1853 inauguration to Theodore Roosevelt’s 1905 inauguration. http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/art/common/image_collection/inauguration_slideshow.htm

Inaugural Addresses

Texts of the inaugural addresses of U.S. Presidents from George Washington to Barack Obama’s inaugural address in 2009 are available at the Avalon Project of the Yale Law School website at http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/inaug.asp or the Bartleby.com website at <http://www.bartleby.com/124/>. At Bartleby.com, click on “Presidents Not Inaugurated” for brief information on Presidents who were not inaugurated and therefore did not make inaugural addresses: Presidents John Tyler, Millard Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, Chester A. Arthur, and Gerald Ford.

Inaugural Committees, Tickets, and Parade Information

The following is basic information on the three major committees that plan and support the various inaugural activities.

Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies

The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies (JCCIC), at <http://www.inaugural.senate.gov/>, is responsible for conducting the official swearing-in ceremonies of the President and Vice President at the Capitol and for planning the luncheon in Statuary Hall. This committee also distributes blocks of tickets for the swearing-in ceremony to Members of both houses; Members decide how they wish to distribute the tickets. Tickets are distributed in early January.

Historical information concerning the JCCIC and the names of past and current members of the committee are available at the JCCIC website. Also included is a link to “Facts & Firsts,” which provides historical information on past presidential inaugurations from George Washington to Barack H. Obama. JCCIC updates can be followed through Twitter- @JCCIC2013 or on its Facebook page at [facebook.com/JCCIC](https://www.facebook.com/JCCIC).¹²

Presidential Inaugural Committee

The Presidential Inaugural Committee (PIC), <http://www.2013pic.org/>, organizes, plans, and executes most of the inaugural celebration activities, including the National Day of Service, opening ceremonies, inaugural parade, concerts, and inaugural balls. The PIC, which is directly responsible to the newly elected President and is staffed by volunteers, generally from the winning party, was formed shortly after the November 6, 2012 general election. The PIC handles all requests for ball tickets, the parade, and other information for events that it plans.

¹² For more information on the JCCIC, see CRS Report R42603, *Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies: History, Membership, and Inaugural Activities*, by Jacob R. Straus.

The PIC, with the support of the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region (JTF-NCR), also selects the high school and college bands that participate in the inaugural parade.

Joint Task Force- National Capital Region

The JTF-NCR, <http://inauguralsupport.mdw.army.mil/inauguration-home>, which was established by the Secretary of Defense, continues the tradition of military participation in the presidential inaugurations that dates back to 1789. The JTF-NCR collects and organizes applications from groups and individuals interested in participating in various inaugural events, although the PIC is responsible for choosing the participants.

The JTF-NCR asks that organizations wishing to participate in a Presidential Inaugural Parade apply online. The last day to submit an application for participation in the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Parade was November 30, 2012.

Additional Sources of Information

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